Continuing the Business of Government

Continuity of Operations (COOP) in the Federal Government

Ron Miller, Senior Advisor
Homeland Security Transition Planning Office
December 11, 2002

Purpose

- To describe Continuity of Operations (COOP) roles and responsibilities as they pertain to the Federal Government
  - Overview and Requirements
  - Executive Agent for COOP
  - COOP Guidance for Departments and Agencies

Definition

COOP:

Effort within individual departments and agencies to assure continuance of their minimum essential functions across a wide range of potential emergencies.

Why COOP?

- Good business practice
  - Assures ability to fulfill essential roles and functions
- Response to all hazards and full spectrum of threats
  - Natural
  - Man-made
  - Technological
  - National security emergencies
- Security of the homeland
  - Delivery of essential services regardless of terrorist threats or attacks

Executive Agent for COOP Planning

- FEMA is currently executive agent for COOP planning
  - Soon to become a DHS responsibility under the Emergency Preparedness & Response Directorate
  - Provide guidance
  - Establish interagency coordinating mechanisms
  - Coordinate assessment of Federal COOP capability
  - Assist D/As as appropriate

COOP Planning Guidance

- First Steps
  - Identify essential functions that must continue to be performed
    - Ensure proper staffing of those functions
    - Identify mission-critical data and systems supporting the essential functions

COOP Planning Guidance
(cont'd)

- Elements of a viable COOP Capability
  - Line of succession
  - Delegation of authorities
  - Alternate facilities
  - Safekeeping vital records
  - Administration and logistics
  - Operating procedures
  - Personnel issues
  - Security
  - Communications
  - Exercises and training

COOP Plan Elements

- Line of Succession and Delegation of Authorities
  - Establish rules and procedures addressing:
    - Conditions for succession
    - Method of notification
    - Time, geographical, organizational limitations
  - Identify which authorities can/should be delegated
  - Identify to whom authorities should be delegated
  - Identify limitations of delegations

COOP Plan Elements
(cont'd)

- Alternate Facilities
  - Identify from existing agency facilities
  - Consider cooperative agreements and sharing with other agencies
  - Virtual office

COOP Plan Elements (cont'd)

- Vital Records
  - Plan for protection, duplication, movement of records (hard copy and electronic) vital to agency's essential functions
    - Emergency operating records
      - Plans and directives
      - Orders of succession
      - Delegations of authority
      - Staffing assignments

COOP Plan Elements (cont'd)

- Vital Records (cont'd)
  - Legal and Financial Records
    - Personnel records
    - Social Security records
    - Payroll records
    - Retirement records
    - Insurance records
    - Contract records

COOP Plan Elements (cont'd)

- Administration and Logistics
  - Identify, preposition, and maintain equipment and other resources required at alternate site
    - Computer equipment and software
    - File cabinets, desks, chairs
    - Office supplies
    - Vehicles

COOP Plan Elements (cont'd)

- Operating Procedures
  - List essential functions
  - Roster personnel with authority and knowledge of functions
  - Develop procedures for alerting, advising, moving employees
  - Plan to notify customers of new work location, phone numbers
  - Develop procedures for performing essential functions
  - Develop procedures for acquiring resources necessary to sustain operations for up to 30 days

COOP Plan Elements (cont'd)

- Personnel Issues
  - Address the health, safety, emotional well-being of all employees and their families
  - Address pay status, administrative leave, layoffs
  - Address medical, special needs, travel issues

COOP Plan Elements (cont'd)

- Security
  - Ensure employee security clearances commensurate with their emergency duties
  - Security of alternate facility (access by employees, customers)
  - Communications security

COOP Plan Elements (cont'd)

- Interoperable Communications
  - Identify and make available at alternate facility the data and communications systems to support essential functions
    - Internal and external communications
    - Secure and non-secure communications
    - Voice, fax, data, Internet, e-mail

COOP Plan Elements (cont'd)

- Exercises and Training
  - Plan training for identified COOP personnel (individual/team)
  - Periodically test alert and notification procedures
  - Plan periodic exercise of operational plans, alternate facilities, interoperable communications
  - Plan joint agency exercises
  - Establish remedial action plan

Business Continuity

- Think of COOP planning as business continuity planning
- How will you continue to provide essential services to your customers if you are denied the use of your primary facilities?

Q&A